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OSWALD, LEE, POST-RUSSIAN PERIOD, TRAVEL, TRIP TO
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RWT/je
Dawny

On August 8, 1978 House Select Committee on Assassinations staffers Elvin Juan Logg and Harold Long interviewed Ramon Alvaro Durant at 10:53 a.m. at the Hotel Del Angel. (Room 808)

The Central Intelligence Agency ^{noting} that to protect their employees did not wish the above mentioned staffers ^{to} speak to Durant in person. Thus three separate rooms were reserved - 808, 809 + 810 - Mr. Durant was in room 809. House Select Committee staffers were in room 810 and Two CIA personnel ^{were in} introduced as Steve and Bruce ^{wanted} room 808. In room 810 a tape recorder was set up along with a small mixing board, a microphone and a speaker. The CIA explained to Committee staffers that Mr. Durant would have a pair / headphones from which he would listen to our questions. He would have a microphone to answer our questions and ^{ASCIA staffers} ~~we would take~~ hear the answer through the loudspeaker.

Ramon Alvaro Durant is a Mexican citizen who was born December 7, 1933. He began to work with the agency in April 1955 doing electronic surveillance from radio cars. From 1957 to 1969 she was the photographic surveillance supervisor. ^{Soviet Embassy} Basically, he said that he was a "carrier". He would carrier film to each of the three bases, pick up film from the three bases and

cover them to the person who processed them - in 1963 it was Dr. Carlos Gutierrez his brother in law - and then cover 3' x 5' prints from his brother in law to his case officer.

Mr. Durant said that in 1963 there were three ^{named} photo bases covering the Soviet Embassy. He) could not recall the names³ but stated that there was one across the street from the Embassy approximately at the second floor. He stated that there was another base a couple of houses down at a higher angle. In this way if there was much traffic the ^{base} ~~pass~~ with the higher angle would get a photo. The third base covered the backyard. The people who manned the bases worked out of their own apartments. They all were led to believe that theirs was the only base because it improved efficiency.

Mr. Durant stated that he was "quite certain" that the stations were manned Monday through Saturday from 10 - 6. Mr. Durant stated that the cameras would hardly ever break down. He said that they worked with Exakte + Baloscope cameras. Durant stated that he delivered the film in bulk to the bases then picked them up approximately 3 times a week. He did not remember whether his case officer in 1963 was Puckett or Keenan.

Mr. Durant's attention was then turned to 1963, when Oswald allegedly visited the Soviet Embassy, and was asked to explain the procedure at that time. Mr. Durant stated that there were yet 3 bases operating. Each base was ^{only} instructed to photograph any foreigners that visited the Soviet Embassy. They were also instructed to keep a log sheet. The log sheet contained the name / base, dates covered. On the left side would be found a number then a time then a brief description ^{of} _{as}

ex : 1 10:53 short spic & white-haired man

The sheets and the film would be picked up by Durant two or three times a week. He would turn them over to ^{his brother} Durant in law who would make 3' x 5' prints + sometimes also contact prints.

[Durant states that they turned completely to contact prints ^{later than 63}] Durant would then turn the prints over to Puchet or Kevan and would never see them again. He stated that in 1963 each base would normally average 50-60 pictures.

Durant stated that it was easy to keep a tab on their efficiency because ~~if they took the same picture twice~~ ~~they took the same picture~~ ~~and the other picture~~ ~~2 good things~~. Durant stated that he was ~~sure~~ ^{90-95%} sure that all foreigners who visited the Embassy ^{ever} once were photographed.

When we turned Mr. Durant's attention to a photo of Oswald he stated that he was always under the impression that they did get a photo of him. He stated that he never saw a photo of Oswald but that he never really studied them. He further stated that after J.F.K.'s assassination + ~~the photo surveillance~~^{He} ~~surveillance; He~~ collection of J.F.K. photos he never got a chance to review the photo collection + logs. In fact he stated that the only time he got to study a picture was when his case officer would request that he ask his ~~underlings~~ ^{underlings} at the bases to lookout for a certain individual + gave him copies of all blurs were done by the agency.

Mr. Durant stated "they would unquestionably get a photo of a foreigner who came to the Embassy on a few occasions. Mr. Durant stated that it was his recollection that all the cameras were working around that time. He said that it bothered him that no photo had come up but that he never inquired because he did not have a need to know. He stated that no one ever congratulated him for getting a picture of Oswald and that no one ever asked him why he had not. This was one reason that made him think that a picture of Oswald had been gotten.

Mr. Duran stated that he does not know if the agency got a gesture or not or whether they had given a gesture to the Warren Commission that was alleged to be Oswald.

Before the interview Mr Duran was asked if he understood the secrecy letter and he answered affirmatively. When asked whether he had been briefed by any CIA personnel he stated no, that he was only told that the HSCA wanted to speak to him. When asked if the CIA had told him to fully cooperate he stated yes.

The interview ^{was} concluded at 11:32

Tell Chuck we talked to Panny Flores.

~~and checked up~~) ~~copy to [unclear]~~
~~[unclear] lines.~~

one more Amming C.O.

but we had no notes
 or files to show.

Perry T I did not know